Replacement Page 1, 1st Paragraph

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a connecting element for suspending an article from a structural element such as a rod, a plate, a pin or the like and for detachably connecting several articles with one another, wherein the connecting element has a first lateral end area, a center part, and a second lateral end area ~~having the features of the preamble of claim 1~~.

Replacement Page 1, 4th Paragraph

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

As a solution to this object it is proposed according to the invention that the connecting element of the aforementioned kind ~~according to the preamble of claim 1~~ is configured in that the first lateral end area, the central part, and the second lateral end area are flat and arranged adjacent to one another, wherein the first end area relative to the center part is angled in a first bent area and the second end area is angled relative to the center part in a second bent area, and wherein the connecting element has two lateral openings or a central cutout or two lateral openings and a central cutout ~~accordance with the characterizing portion of said claim~~.

Replacement Page 3, Paragraph Lines 20-21

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be explained in the following in more detail with the aid of the drawing. The drawing shows embodiments of the invention. It is shown in:

Replacement Paragraph Bridging Pages 4 and 5

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The connecting element 1 illustrated in Fig. 1 has a first lateral area 31, a center part 32, and a second lateral end area 33; all are flat and are arranged sequentially when viewed from the left to the right. The first end area 31 is connected to the center part 32 by a bent area or angled area 13. Also, the center part 32 is connected to the end area 33 by a bent area or angled area 14. As shown in Fig. 3, the two bent areas 13, 14 are angled such that the center part 32 relative to a plane 35 that extends through the two end areas 31 and 33 is positioned above said plane 35 within a plane 41. The planes 35 and 41 are parallel to one another and the spacing between the planes 35, 41 is defined by the height of the bent areas. The bent area 13 has a lateral opening 9 and the bent area 14 has a lateral opening 10. The center part 32 has a central cutout 11 that is symmetrical to a center axis 36. In the connecting element according to Fig. 1, the lateral openings 9, 10 are aligned such that an opening direction 37 of the lateral opening 9 and an opening direction 38 of the lateral opening 10 are oriented opposite to an opening direction 39 of the cutout 11. For attachment of the connecting element to a backpack or a bag, on the lateral end areas 31, 33, an attachment point or fastening point 15, 16 is provided approximately centrally, respectively.